

2015 VicPD Honours Ceremony

Her Honour, Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of BC was there to assist in the ceremony.

Governor General's Commendation:

On behalf of the Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable David Johnson, commendations were presented to Constable Boris Sark and Constable Chris Gilbert for an incident that occurred in 2012. The two off-duty officers were taking part in physical training and were out on a run. They heard a woman screaming for help. Without hesitation, they ran towards the screams. Aided by the street lights, the officers were able to see a man throw a woman to the ground where she was then kicked by the suspect. As they grew closer they observed him continue to attack the female victim. When they were metres of the suspect, the attacker turned and pointed a handgun directly at them. The officers began negotiating with the suspect in an effort to persuade him to drop the weapon and surrender. The bloodied victim was able to crawl away as the officers continued to negotiate and began to triangulate on the male. At that point, the suspect stated that the handgun was not real and the officers took control of the suspect. The victim was treated for several injuries and the suspect was charged with several offences. The brave initiative and split-second decision making of the Constables were recognized with the Governor General's Commendation.

Exemplary Service Awards:

The Police Exemplary Service Medal was created in 1983 to recognize the men and women dedicated to preserving Canada's public safety through long and outstanding service. This honour is conferred by the Governor General of Canada and was presented by Her Honour. These awards are a reflection of the hard work and commitment each of these recipients has made to the department and to the communities of Victoria and Esquimalt. Recipients must have completed 20 years of full-time service with one or more recognized Canadian police forces.

Detective Sergeant Brad Fraser: Served in a variety of sections at Vic PD including Patrol, Strike Force and Major Crimes. He has also served with distinction on national and regional law enforcement teams, including the Integrated National Security Enforcement Team and the Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit. Highlights of his career include directing investigations and solving homicides on Vancouver Island, leading a community-based task force on the impact of crystal meth in Victoria and receiving the Medal of Bravery in 2012. He also helped raise 1.4 million dollars for pediatric cancer research in 2004 as a Tour de Rock rider and developed the Challenge Cup, which is an annual hockey game between VicPD and Saanich Police, where all proceeds go to Special Olympics.

Sergeant Len Hollingsworth: Served with both the VicPD and Vancouver PD over his career. In Vancouver, he served in Investigative Services, Youth Services Unit, the Primary Response Division and the Drug Education and Enforcement Team. He also worked the Downtown East Side Beat, the Prostitution Task Force, the PNE policing team and numerous narcotics and property crime projects.

At VicPD, he has served in Patrol, the Major Crimes Section, and the Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team. Most recently he served in the Policy, Research and Audit section and the Analysis and Intelligence Section.

Constable Kristin Mutch: Served in both the Vancouver PD and VicPD. In Vancouver, served in Patrol, the Bike Squad, and as a plainclothes officer on a number of focused enforcement projects involving property crime offenders and prostitution.

With VicPD, she served in Patrol and as a School Resource Officer where she was responsible for eight schools and even today she is approached by former students who thank her for her service in that role.

Constable Hayley Swann: Started in Patrol where she quickly gained a reputation for hard work and unbridled enthusiasm. Also served in the bike unit and the Community Policing section. She has demonstrated an ability to interact with people with great compassion and empathy.

Deputy Chief Commendations:

This award recognizes acts of bravery in dangerous circumstances, where members knowingly place themselves at risk in order to prevent injury or to attempt to save a life of another person; or where members demonstrate service beyond what is expected of them.

Constable Craig Barker: On the evening of March 13, 2014, Constable Barker was travelling in his vehicle when he observed a man being chased by another male. Being close to Hillside Mall, he believed the man was attempting to escape the area after having committed a theft. As the Constable drew near he identified himself as a police officer and ordered the man to stop. The man ran several more metres before turning with a weapon in his hand. The Constable again repeated that he was an officer and ordered the suspect to drop his weapon. Eventually, he was able to, persuade him to do so. The brave initiative was a reflection of Constable's professionalism and integrity and were in keeping with the highest traditions of VicPD.

Detective Constable (Retired) Larry Hemstad: in 1972, Mr Hong was found deceased at his business. Having sustained a single gunshot wound to his head, his murder was investigated by VicPD. Despite efforts, Mr Hong's murder remained an open investigation until 2014 when Det/Cst Hemstad was able to finally bring closure to this crime. In 2009, he and his partner were assigned to take over this cold case investigation. With an unrelenting drive to bring justice to Mr Hong's killer, and with an unwavering desire to bring closure to Mr Hong's family, these two detectives moved the case forward. Despite the progress made in the case, the investigation was again stalled due to international complications and witness issues. In 2011, he was transferred to a new section. Despite being assigned a new job, he voluntarily worked this file. Demonstrating his true commitment to Mr Hong and his family, and showing exemplary service to the community, he was finally able to overcome many of the obstacles that had previously stalled the investigation. He was able to conclude this cold case.

Constable Ken Ramsay: For over ten years, he has served as a Tactical Police Explosives Technician as well as the founding member of the Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team's Explosive Section. He has been instrumental in the development, growth and operation of this highly specialized program. He has dedicated himself to ensuring that the Victoria regional police explosive program has had access to regular current explosives training. As well, he has contributed on the national level in Ottawa as a respected instructor of the Canadian Police College's Explosive Unit. He is the only VicPD officer to have ever been designated as an Expert Witness in this field with the BC Provincial Court.